

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-12 and 14-18 stand rejected under § 103 on the basis of Prompt et al. and O’Flaherty et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, because the cited reference does not disclose or suggest the features of the present invention for searching data from both personal data and common data using personal information accessible only to a predetermined user. This feature improves the usefulness of the database because data which is not stored in the common data accessible to all users can be stored in the personal data accessible only to the predetermined user for personal use.

Moreover, by using personal information stored in a personal dictionary accessible only to the predetermined user for searching data from the personal data and the common data, it is possible for the predetermined user to prevent an unexpected modification of the personal information on either of or both management and analysis of personal data and common data by the other users, and to perform a database search customized for the predetermined user.

Under the heading “A. Virtual Directory Server” (paragraphs [0160] to [0174]), the Prompt et al. reference illustrates an example of data source access and capturing of schema to establish a hierachal directory. Prompt et al. merely discloses a database management apparatus for transforming relational data stored in a relational database into a hierarchical directory data.

The Examiner recognizes that Prompt et al. does not disclose a personal table storing unit that stores data as personal data. Applicants respectfully submit that the Prompt

et al. reference also does not disclose the feature for searching data from both the personal data and the common data using the personal information accessible only to the predetermined user.

The O'Flaherty et al. reference discloses controlling whether data (which corresponds to the common data of the present invention) stored in database should be provided to a user by referring to a metadata defined by the user. However, O'Flaherty also does not disclose searching data from both the personal data and the common data using the personal information accessible only to the predetermined user. Therefore, even if the cited references were combined, they still would not disclose or suggest the data searching feature of the present invention. For this reason, claims 1, 8, 15 and 18, along with their respective dependent claims are believed to be allowable over the cited references.

Claims 1-5, 7-12 and 14-18 stand rejected under §103 on the basis of Prompt, O'Flaherty et al. and Scanlon. Applicants traverse this rejection for the reasons given with respect to independent claims 1 and 8. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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